

## **REMARKS**

Claim 28 has been amended to state that each further network element appears to each other further network element as an intermediate system within the routing area, and that the end systems are made known to the rest of the communications arrangement by Link State Protocol (LSP) packets generated by the one or more gateway network elements. The combination of features of amended claim 28 is not shown in any of the prior art documents or combinations thereof.

Basis for the amendments to claim 28 can be found on page 10, lines 8-10 and page 8, lines 13-14.

A key element of the present invention is that these further network elements, although being intermediate systems, are made to appear to other parts of the network as end systems. As set out in the description, by way of example, in a preferred embodiment the appearance of an end system is achieved by the gateway network element (GNE) preventing LSPs generated by the further network elements reaching the rest of the network and also by making the rest of the network believe that the GNE is at a domain boundary thus allowing the GNE to be manually set with end-system adjacencies on connections to the further network elements.

In this way the further network elements are made to appear to the rest of the network as end systems even though they are still intermediate systems and are still, for example, able to forward packets.

The present invention allows a significant improvement of communications systems by providing for reductions in the number of intermediate systems that any particular node has to deal with. This is achieved by masking the existence of large numbers of intermediate systems.

These advantages are not achieved by the system of Ambrosoli as it does not disclose the structure and function of amended claim 28.

Ambrosoli discloses a general configuration and the partitioning of a SDH network to achieve an effective structure that is resilient to link failure and that does not grossly increase overhead network traffic. Ambrosoli also addresses the issue of the co-existence between non-IS-IS and IS-IS network elements. However, there is no disclosure or suggestion of any reconfiguration of the gateway and further network elements to appear as end systems as required by amended claim 28. Further, each further network element does not appear to each other further network element as an Intermediate System within the routing area. Nor are the end systems made known to the rest of the communications system by Link State Protocol packets generated by the one or more gateway network elements. Thus, Ambrosoli fails to disclose or suggest many requirements of claim 28 and therefore applicant submits that claim 28 and its dependent claims are allowable.

Enclosed herewith is another copy of European Patent No. 0 895 380 which was submitted in the Information Disclosure Statement filed December 5, 2001.

Wherefore, a favorable action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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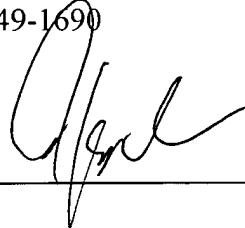
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